



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD

Vol. 2, No. 4

231 King's Highway East

November, 1959

OLD CAPE MAY AND NEW RUSSIA TO BE FEATURED IN TALK BY DR. HORACE G. RICHARDS ON 24th

In keeping with our high standard of distinguished speakers for the 1959 program season, the Society presents for our next meeting a "double feature" by Dr. Horace G. Richards, Associate Curator of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

Dr. Richards will talk on a subject very close to the interest of all South Jersey historians—Old Cape May—and will illustrate his talk with some excellent pictures. In addition, we are to be treated to history in the making with a discussion based on Dr. Richard's recent visits to the Soviet Union.

SOCIETY ENJOYS RARE PREVIEW OF "THE FRANKLIN PAPERS"

What is so rare as a "scoop" on *Life Magazine*? It did happen here to the delight of Society members when they heard Dr. Whitfield Bell, associate editor of "The Papers of Benjamin Franklin," speak at our July meeting on "Adventures with Franklin's Letters."

In the October 5 issue of *Life*, a large section was devoted to the first part of a series on "The Franklin Papers," with appropriate recognition to associate editor Whitfield J. Bell.

Anyone who attended the July meeting and subsequently read this material

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, November 24th

TIME: 8 P. M.

PLACE: Lake Street Friends'
Meeting House

in *Life* found it infinitely more significant and interesting after Dr. Bell's introduction and footnotes.

Franklin's letters, we were told, were found in some 350 places from Honolulu to Moscow. They were mainly in possession of Franklin's descendants who scooped them out of shoeboxes, trunks, closets and other forgotten places not thinking they would ever be important. Many were found in printing museums and savings banks.

A number of letters were found in New Jersey among Franklin's descendants and at the Salem County Historical Society. The Haddonfield Historical Society contributed a letter from Franklin to John Ladd of Gloucester County, a surveyor to whom Franklin sold many books over the years.

Dr. Bell propounded his philosophy for all manuscript-hunters. He said the

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DUES NEEDED TO FULFILL SOCIETY'S 1959-60 PLANS

No matter how worthy the membership in any organization, dues have a way of being pushed aside for more pressing needs or matters. However, the vitality of any organization depends on its membership dues to maintain the very things which make membership worthwhile.

Your 1959-1960 dues for membership in the Historical Society are now due. They are more needed now than ever to fulfill the Society's goal of acquiring magnificent Greenfield Hall as our new headquarters, launching our educational program and establishing a cultural institution which will be of immense value to everyone in Haddonfield.

The Society offers three types of membership. They are:

Contributing Membership:

\$25.00 per couple per year.

Sustaining Membership:

\$10.00 per couple per year.

Single Membership:

\$5.00 per year.

SOCIETY ACQUIRES INTERESTING 18th and 19th CENTURY ITEMS

At our last Council meeting, Mrs. Ruth C. Dalton, Curator, reported the acquisition of a number of interesting old items which are well worth seeing at Society headquarters.

Among them are a late nineteenth century wedding gown and veil and a fichu; a Wistanburg bottle; an Empire chair and two figurines.

Other recent gifts to the Society are two pairs of silver shoe buckles; a silver spoon for measuring drugs; a pewter soapbox for shaving soap and an old glass case containing glasses from the Charles Evans' collection.

Also acquired were facsimiles of two wedding certificates, one bearing the signature of William Penn.

NEW HEADQUARTERS PROGRESS REPORTED BY MR. LEICHT

Dear Members:

You are no doubt wondering what the status is on Greenfield Hall, our new headquarters for the Historical Society of Haddonfield. We are pleased to be able to report to you that considerable progress has been made since our last meeting in acquiring this property.

An agreement has been entered into between us and the owners and an initial sum of \$10,000 has been paid. Final settlement was to have been made on September 15. However, the possibility of a merger with the Camden County Historical Society caused a delay in obtaining court approval of our purchase, and the obtaining of a special exception from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Since settlement was contingent upon these factors, it had to be postponed. To date there is \$28,000 on hand. With the sale of our present headquarters, we estimate there will be a sum of about \$6000 still to be raised. Your fund-raising committee hopes to have this sum in the near future.

The merger of our Society and the Camden County Historical Society will depend upon the success of negotiations between them and the owners of Greenfield Hall for the entire property. It is my hope that these negotiations will be successful and that I will be able to present to you for your consideration a proposal for merger. Should all this take place, one of the finest Historical Societies and Museums in the country will be ours.

Herbert R. Leicht, President.



HISTORIC CHARLESTON WOODS REVISITED

(Mrs. Lelia Dukes Wiggins, a distinguished local historian and member of the Haddonfield Historical Society, brings poetry to history in this nostalgic and charming account of one of the oldest and loveliest woods near Haddonfield.)

In the Charleston Woods in early November the scent of the earth is good. The fragrance of growing things is there. The tall pine and the sturdy oak coax the eye to an upward glance—to the patch of heavenly blue where—

“The Soul may split the sky in two
To let the Smile of God shine
through.”

Surely the present area of “The Old Charleston Woods” on Kresson Road just beyond Haddonfield and the New Jersey Turnpike is but a small part of the original which covered a wedge-shaped plateau between the water-sheds that began near Berlin with an altitude of 160’ and Marlton with 100’ and then slipped down to Haddonfield with 50’ to Westmont, Collingswood, and on to Camden with 21’.

According to our early historians, Clement and Prowell, a section about two miles south of the King’s Road in 1777 was used by foraging parties to seclude Lafayette’s troops and their supplies.

Could Elizabeth Haddon during her

first visit in 1701 to the family of Francis Collins at Mountwell have seen in these woods the refreshing elements so natural in the English Estates of Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden, and champion of the Friends who came here as the earliest settlers?

In 1839 the Deeds recorded for the Cresson Family at the Gloucester County seat in Woodbury use Rowandtown (Westmont), Hopkins Mill, and Milford (Kresson) as limits of parcels of land and designate the special corners as a white oak, a pine stump, and a mulberry stump. Today it is difficult to find the old trees, but there is beauty and variety among the oaks 47 percent, pine 22, maple 7, cedar 6, hemlock 5, all others 13 which include the colorful sassafras, sweet gum, dogwood, beeches, laurel, aspen, tulip, holly and osage.

The flora and fauna have changed with the years from the days when the council-fires of the Lenni Lenape Tribe of the Delawares were a feature of our landscape, and the Colestown Burial

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OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED AT NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

The Nominating Committee of the Historical Society submits the following names for the offices to be filled at the next annual meeting. This is the first election of officers under the new by-laws. Only those officers of group B expire this time.

Second Vice President—Mr. William E. Sherman, Jr.

Third Vice President—Mr. Richard H. Hammond

Treasurer—Charles R. Mulloy, Jr.

Curator—Mrs. Robert J. Dalton

Members of the Board of Trustees

(three year term expiring 1962)

Miss Florence M. Dickinson

Mr. C. Wilder Marsh

Mr. Joseph M. Tatem

Mr. Howard S. Tilton

Mrs. Donald S. Willis

Historical Society of Haddonfield

Haddonfield, New Jersey

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HADDONFIELD

DR. BELL

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first rinciple was to believe that nothing is ever lost in order to have the courage and patience to persevere. The second principle, a contradiction of the first, is to believe that nothing ever survives so as to reconcile yourself to disappopintment.

CHARLESTON WOODS

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Ground was shared as a final resting place.

The arbutus is seldom seen, but the turkey-beard bravely invades this area at favorable times. The spring beauty, violets, may-apple, blue gentian, lady-slipper, tea berry, aster, Queen's lace, iron weed, joe-pie-weed, daisy, black-eyed Susan, golden rod — abound with the aquatics along the Runs (Tindale's, Buckman's, the Ellis, and Cropwell Brook) as well as near the Ponds (Evans and Hopkins).

Even today the wildlife includes the stray fox, turtle, frog, raccoon, deer, skunk, wood chuck, musk rat, squirrel, rabbit, ducks, quail, and pheasant. The mocking bird, robin, nut hatch, red bird, blue jay, and mourning dove are numerous.

In the latter years of "The Good Grey Poet" Walt Whitman had these sources of inspiration for his "Specimen Days" and with great pride in the famil-

iar spots between Laurel Springs, his "Cottage on Mickle Street," and his resting place in Harleigh he showed to his close friend John Burroughs, the naturalist of New England, the vital sources of his daily life. Perhaps a philosophy from "The Carol of Occupations" was built upon these Lanes and Highways:

"Will you seek afar off? You surely come back at last,

In things best known to you, finding the best, or as good as the best,

In folks nearest to you finding the sweetest, strongest, lovingest;

Happiness, Knowledge, not in another place, but this place—not for another hour, but this hour."

The Historical Society of Haddonfield

The purpose of the Society is to encourage historical study and research, to perpetuate the historical heritage of Haddonfield and to acquire and preserve articles of historical and antiquarian interest.

Open Tuesday through Saturday afternoons from 2:30 to 4:30 o'clock.

Mrs. James G. Aiken, Editor
Historical Society Bulletin

Send all editorial contributions to:
120 Warwick Road
Haddonfield, N. J.